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CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VELLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

RISE OF SAT-CHI CONTINUES: WORLD NO.1 DUO CLINCH PARIS OPEN

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty make short work of unseeded Chinese Taipei's Lee Jhe-Huei and Yang Po-Hsuan in straight games

RUBBER-STUMPING A DOMINATING WEEK

The Indian pair, one of the favourites to return from the French capital with a medal at the Olympics this Summer, didn't lose a single game all week. Across the five matches, they never allowed their opponents to settle. Their next event is the one at the All England beginning this week

ROAD TO TITLE

R1: bt Ong Yew Sin/ Teo Ee Yi 21-13, 24-22

R2: bt Man Wei Chong/ Kai Wun Tee 21-13, 21-12

QF: Supak Jomkoh/ Kittinupong Kedren 21-19, 21-13

SF: Kang Min Hyuk/ Seo Seung Jae 21-13, 21-16

2 The Indian pair has won the Paris Open for the second time

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State may ban cotton candy, regulate sale of manchurian, kabab

RISHITA KHANNA @ Bengaluru

AFTER Puducherry and Tamil Nadu, Karnataka may soon ban cotton candy and regulate the sale of popular street foods, like chicken kabab, gobi manchurian and others, that are said to contain Rhodamine B, a textile dye, which is a cancer-causing chemical.

Sources from the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) said they collected food samples from across the state, including Bengaluru, and the test results "confirmed" the presence of Rhodamine B, a carcinogen that is added to give food items the bright hue. The laboratory results of the collected food samples have been received and keeping this as the foundation, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao is on Monday likely to announce the ban on cotton candy and regulate the sale of other food items.

Earlier this year, cotton candy, a favourite among children, was labelled "very harmful" after tests conducted at a government laboratory in Tamil Nadu detected the presence of Rhodamine B. Following the test results, both the Puducherry and Tamil Nadu governments imposed a blanket ban on cotton candy.

Health experts said Rhodamine B, which is cheap, is commonly used to give vibrant colours not only to cotton candy, but also jellies and candies, and surprisingly, even chilli powder. "We collected cotton candy samples across the state. We also randomly collected the samples of food items that are believed to be infused with chemicals to give them a bright, attractive colour. These chemicals when consumed can cause various health problems, ranging from throat irritation to stomach pain, and have the potential to lead to birth defects and several types of cancers," an FSSAI source said.

TMC GOES SOLO, I.N.D.I.A OUT OF BENGAL

Mamata Banerjee announces candidates for all 42 LS seats: Cong says talks still possible

PRANAB MONDAL & PREETHA NAIR @ Kolkata / New Delhi

OFFICIALLY closing the door on the I.N.D.I.A bloc in West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress on Sunday announced candidates for all 42 Lok Sabha seats in the state, roping in both veterans and greenhorns.

Despite the snub, the Congress said there is still time to make the alliance work through negotiations. "Our doors are always open and an alliance can happen anytime before withdrawal," said Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge.

Among the newcomers in the TMC list are former cricketer Yusuf Pathan, who will contest from state Congress chief Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury's Baharampur constituency in Murshidabad district. Adhir, a vocal critic of TMC, was against the Congress having any truck with the Trinamool. Murshidabad has the highest Muslim population in Bengal at 67% and Chowdhury has been winning the Baharampur seat since 1999 though his victory margin has dropped over the years.

Reacting to Pathan's candidature, Chowdhury said: "If Mamata Banerjee wanted to show respect to the cricketer, she could have sent him to the Rajya Sabha. Bur she decided to field him in Baharampur to divide Muslim votes."

Notably, the TMC decided to field Mahua Moitra, who was suspended from Lok Sabha in connection with cash-for-question scandal, from Krishnagar.

"The allegation levelled against her was during the tenure of her previous term in Lok Sabha. If she gets elected fresh, the old allegations will not hold and there will be no bar for her to become an MP," said a senior TMC leader. Among the five sitting MPs axed from the list is Nusrat Jahan from Basirhat, where Sandeshkhali uproar surfaced.

The talks between the two parties hit a roadblock last month after TMC supremo and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee refused to part with more than two seats for the Congress in the state. Though the Congress scaled down its demand from 10 seats to six, the TMC chose to contest solo in the state.

The TMC's main grouse was West Bengal Congress chief Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury's continuous attacks on Mamata and the party.

Hegde: 400-seat target to amend Constitution

SUBHASH CHANDRA NS @ Siddapur (Uttara Kannada)

UTTARA Kannada MP Anantkumar Hegde on Sunday triggered yet another controversy, saying BJP's slogan of "ab ki baar 400 paar" is aimed at ensuring two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha to allow the incoming government to amend the Constitution, which has been tampered with by the previous Congress governments.

At the BJP workers' meet at Halageri in Siddapur taluk of Uttara Kannada district, Hegde who is known for his infamous speech stating he will rewrite the Constitution in the past, said, "We have a majority in the Lok Sabha, while we have a simple majority in the Rajya Sabha. We need two-thirds majority in both Houses and in the states too to amend the Constitution."

He said, "Congress twisted and amended the original Constitution and inserted unwanted things in such a manner as to create a setback for Hindu society.

CONTINUED ON: P5

Swiss Federal Councillor Guy Parmelin presents a copy of an article published in this newspaper in 1947 to commerce minister Piyush Goyal on Sunday in New Delhi. The article pitches for enhancing trade between India and Switzerland | P10

EXPRESS READ

Man kills son for seeking money, fakes it as suicide, held

Bengaluru: The city police have arrested a man who allegedly killed his 21-year-old son and tried to pass it off as a suicide. Prakash's plot unravelled when the postmortem report revealed that the cause of death was strangulation. Later, Prakash told the police that he strangled Yogesh using his wife's veil and then hanged the body from a fan to make it appear like suicide. Prakash said he was fed up as Yogesh repeatedly demanded money from him to buy alcohol | P3

Did Modi stop Putin from nuking Ukraine?

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

THE Joe Biden administration had solid intelligence inputs that Russia was seriously considering to unleash nuclear weapons on Ukraine sometime in late 2022. So, the US administration sought to enlist India and China's help to prevent Russia using a tactical or battlefield nuclear weapon, says a new book *The Return of Great Powers* written by CNN's chief national security correspondent Jim Sciutto, quoting US officials. A chapter of the book is shared on the CNN website.

Sciutto reveals that senior US officials told him that outreach and public statements from Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping helped avert a grave crisis. "I think the fact that we know China weighed in, India weighed in, others weighed in, may have had some effect on their thinking," Sciutto quotes a senior US administration official.

It may be recalled that Modi had said "Today's era must not be of war" and urged both Russia and Ukraine to resolve their differences through dialogue and diplomacy. Modi's statement "Today's era must not be of war" was also used in the G20 Bali Leaders' Declaration in November 2022.

In 2022, Ukrainian forces had a clear lead on Russian-occupied Kherson, putting Russian units in danger of being surrounded, the book reveals. The view of the Biden administration was that Russia would not tolerate such a catastrophic loss and Putin would see it as a direct threat. In such an assessment, Russia could view a nuclear strike as a deterrent against further losses, says the book.

India, Euro bloc deal can fetch $100b FDI

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

INDIA on Sunday signed a trade pact with a four-nation European bloc that gives access to India's goods and services to their markets and opens up possibilities of $100 billion investments as FDI in the country spread over the next 15 years, according to a statement from the Ministry of Commerce and Industries.

The four nation bloc includes Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland. Dubbed European Free Trade Association (EFTA), the trade pact would not include foreign portfolio investments and it would take an year for it to come into force. This agreement can generate upto one million jobs in India.

EFTA will eliminate or reduce the import tariffs on 99.6% of India's exports. Similarly India will eliminate or reduce import tariffs on 95.3% of the exports from EFTA nations. The deal gives the four nations market access to non-agri products, concessions on processed agricultural products. However, agricultural products are out of the ambit of the pact and there is no change on duty on gold.

On IPR, both the sides agreed to follow Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights. P7,10

ASIAN QUALIFIERS

Error at trials for Oly medallists Bajrang, Ravi

FIROZ MIRZA @ Chennai

Bajrang Punia

Ravi Kumar Dahiya

TOKYO bronze medallist Bajrang Punia had been in the forefront of a massive protest against former Wrestling Federation of India president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh last year. Missing most of the season last year, he failed to medal at the Asian Games despite getting a direct entry in 65kg. To add to his woes, on Sunday, he failed to secure a place in the India squad for the Asian Championships and Asian Olympic Games qualifiers to be held next month.

Joining him is another Tokyo silver medallist Ravi Dahiya, who had been nursing injuries for quite some time.

The trials at SAI Centre in Sonepat were held jointly by the WFI and ad-hoc committee after United World Wrestling said it would accept entries only by WFI. The Asian championships and qualifier next month will be held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Gold medallists from six Olympic weight categories each in men's freestyle and Greco-Roman will represent the country at the qualifying event. The women's trials are scheduled at SAI Centre in Patiala on Monday.

Even as the loss was second consecutive selection trial loss for Ravi in the last nine months, it was Bajrang's defeat that garnered attention. He was given a direct entry for the Asian Games by the ad-hoc committee headed by Bhupinder Singh Bajwa last year. Call it poetic, aggrieved wrestler Sujeet Kalkal, who moved the Delhi HC against Bajrang's direct entry unsucoesfully, found a place in the squad. Bajrang, who had a tough first bout too, didn't compete in the bronze play-off.

India team for Asian qualifiers

57KG Aman Sherawat

65KG Sujeet Kalkal

74KG Jaideep

86KG Deepak Punia

97KG Deepak Nehra

125KG Sumit Malik